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SUNDOWN FOR 'STAR WARS' SAGA

Daisy Ridley on how the character of Rey changed her life, and what's next after 'The Rise of Skywalker,' which opens in theaters Friday. 10

LUCASFILMS / DISNEY

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WKND

Anya Chalotra as Yennefer.
KATALIN VERMES/NETFLIX

In the world of monsters and magic...

The women of "The Witcher" talk bringing a new life to the wildly popular series.

MOLLY GIVEN

There has been quite a bit of anticipation surrounding the release of Netflix's latest fantasy series "The Witcher," and it's easy to see why. With a variety of novels, short stories and video games surrounding the mystical world of monsters and magic, a large fan base has already accumulated – so much so that it is even said to rival the dedicated audience of HBO's "Game of Thrones." The story written on paper and shown throughout the virtual world of gaming follows Geralt, a monster hunter who was trained and mutated at a young age to hunt and slay the evil creatures in his world, and Superman himself, Henry Cavill, has stepped into those coveted shoes. But what's interesting specifically about Netflix's adaptation of "The Witcher" is the cardinal presence of the women in the story, and quite specifically the developed backstory of Yennefer (Anya Chalotra), a sorceress who's journey shifts as she begins to discover her powers and Ciri (Freya Allan), a princess who must find her own strength after suffering a devastating loss.

Both Chalotra and Allan sat down with Metro to discuss their character's journeys, the pressure they felt taking on such iconic roles and overall why the women of "The Witcher" have brought a new life to this cabalistic series.

Was there pressure for either of you taking on such iconic characters? Also how much inspiration did you take from the book versions of Yennefer and Ciri?

AC: For me, I just turned away from that pressure of playing such an iconic character and focused on the script that we had, that was our bible. We knew we were basing the series on the novels, but we were doing something quite different with developing Yennefer's back story and meeting Yennefer and Ciri independently from Geralt's story. They have their own wants and desires, and I've had conversations with Lauren [Schmidt Hissrich, creator] and the other cast members about how we were going to bring Yennefer's truth to the screen. It's really easy to focus on the negative in this industry because it's so personal, or for me, I take it quite personally. It's very daunting thinking about it coming out, but also, there is so much positivity out there. I just focus on that and it does change my mindset about myself and my work – we've all worked so hard and no one can fault that.

FA: The minute I found out that I got the role I read "Blood of Elves," but then the scripts started coming through so I just began focusing on those. I actually felt that I didn't need to take too much from [the novels], it was more a reassurance. So when I read them, it was more of like, 'oh okay, that's exactly how I imagined it anyway' kind of thing. Just from the audition, I had already gotten a sense of Ciri's spirit and who she was. As for pressure with the role, I'm still trying to not be terrified about the show coming out. For me, it is very scary and daunting, but I've just got to keep in mind that I did work really hard and gave everything to every day that I was on set. You just have to remember not everyone is going to like it, but also hope that people are going to get something from what you've done. I can't lie and say I don't find it scary, but you've just got to try and not feed into it too much. I try to think about my fourteen-year-old self when I first started acting – I would just be so excited and proud. It's easy to forget about that when you're in it, so you have to think back to that and really appreciate where you're at.

What do you specifically like about your characters?

FA: I love how Ciri is not afraid to speak out – she really vocalizes her opinion and values her voice, she uses it. She also realizes the power of choice, which we always say is kind of a running theme throughout the entire show. I just love how stubborn, feisty and curious she is, she always wants to learn. I can really relate to that as well.

AC: I learned a lot from Yennefer – but I think we connect a lot through our fearlessness. She's stubborn and fierce and she's really magical – she has powers and it was so exciting to act that fantasy element out. But also, she uses her insecurities and what she thinks is her weakness as a strength, it becomes her strength and makes her powerful because of everything she suffered for as a child.

Yennefer goes on quite the journey and transforms throughout the series, was it difficult shifting mindsets throughout the course of the show?

AC: It was my greatest challenge yet as an actor, and one that I loved as well. I have to play her from age fourteen to someone who is in her late 70s, but not only that, she has a deformed spine and a jaw abnormality. I have to figure out how I can best bring that truth to the screen so people can look past that and see what's happening emotionally for her. I was worried that I wouldn't be able to pull that off, but I tried to not make it too cerebral and just trust my instincts, and also trust the people around me and their advice and direction as well.

It seemed that with Ciri you had to do a lot of filming on your own, what were some of the challenges of acting solo for most of the first season?

FA: It was really challenging, right at the start of filming it was the opposite. I was surrounded by people all of the time, we had a real camaraderie and I loved it. Then suddenly, it all went and I would come in and sit on my own – it was a little sad, but I think it also really helped with the character because I went through the same thing she did, just not with the same intensity. We both lost people in a sense – I had made such great friends and suddenly they were all gone and I was on my own, and that's what she goes through, just more extreme. Luckily there was a camaraderie with the crew and that really helped.

Obviously, this show uses a lot of CGI and filming tricks to create the magic, was it difficult filming those types of scenes and having to make believe in those moments?

AC: It's tricky because it wasn't something we were all on the same page on, we didn't know what the monster would look like as a whole. We can imagine whatever we wanted and whatever scared us the most, but we hadn't seen what that really was going to be like. You really did have to use your imagination and hope that it's believable and rooted in truth in those moments because it's real in that world.

This fantasy genre is wildly popular, but what would you say sets "The Witcher" apart from other films or series along the same lines?

FA: I think with regards to the women in it, what's so great is that our stories are very independent of Geralt's. They're not attached to his, we have our own viewpoints. Also, the women are strong, but not because of a man, which is often quite rare to find in the fantasy genre.

Overall why do you think people feed into the fantasy genre so much?

FA: I think it has to do with the fact that there is so much to be obsessed with. So many people can like fantasy because there are so many different elements to it and exploring a world that is so different from our own with different possibilities is very easy to get addicted too.

AC: I think it's escapism, you want to escape into a different world. Everything is so serious around us, and fantasy is a place where anyone and anything can exist. It's magic.

"The Witcher" drops today on Netflix.

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Looking for some fun and unique things to do in Philly this week? We've got you covered.

FRANKFORD HALL-IDAYS

Every weekend in December, Philadelphians can head to Fishtown hotspot Frankford Hall to enjoy their annual Frankford Hall-idays extravaganza. The German Biergarten has taken their repertoire up a notch this year with an abundant amount of colorful and festive activities including free photos with Jolly St. Nick and performances by The Lara & Joe Show. As a special treat, guests can also sip on complimentary hot cocoa loaded with mini marshmallows while there.
Every weekend in December, 10 am - 3 pm, Frankford Hall, 1210 Frankford Ave., Philadelphia, frankfordhall.com

SIPS & SELFIES WITH SANTA

The Shops at Liberty Place and Cradles to Crayons are inviting everyone to experience holiday cheer for a great cause every Saturday in December. Guests can nab a selfie with Kris Kringle himself for free, and also indulge in beer, other tasty non-alcoholic drinks and holiday cocktails such as a Peppermint Mojito and a spiced Cranberry Mule from the new pop-up Bourbon Lounge by Bluebird Distilling. At the end of the month, The Shops at Liberty Place will donate $1 for each selfie posted and tagged, to Cradles to Crayons.
Every Saturday in December, 12 pm - 6 pm, The Shops at Liberty Place, 1625 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, shopsatliberty.com

"STAR WARS" BEER NIGHT

Head to Iron Hill Brewery in Wilmington to check out their "Star Wars" beer dinner in honor of the new movie coming out this weekend. There will be eight unique beers to sample, as well as a "Star Wars" costume contest beginning at 6:30 pm. Beer choices include the "Padawan" chocolate vanilla oatmeal stout, "The Empire" bourbon vanilla imperial porter, the "Jedi Mind Trick" Russian imperial stout and more.
Dec. 20, reservations available from 4 pm - 9 pm, Iron Hill Brewery Wilmington, 620 Justison St., Wilmington, DE, ironhillbrewery.com

POP-UP BAKE SALE

Chef Jessie Prawlucki-Styer, co-owner and pastry chef of Fond and Philadelphia pastry chef Monica Glass have teamed up to host a pop-up bake sale featuring their most acclaimed pastries and baked goods this weekend. The sale will feature plenty of tasty treats and delicious bites including sweet, savory and gluten-free options. A few highlights include sourdough baguettes, crisp peppermint meringues, gluten-free rolls and much, much more. **Dec. 21, 10 am - 2 pm, Fond, 1537 S 11th St., Philadelphia, fondphilly.com**

BRUNCH WITH SANTA

Philadelphians will have two opportunities to brunch with Jolly Old St. Nick this weekend. Head to City Tap House in University City on Saturday and Sunday to grab some photos with Kris Kringle, watch holiday movies, check out offerings from a balloon artist, indulge in delicious treats and a Santa pancake making station and more. A $5 ticket acts as a donation to the Valley Youth House for this event as well.
Dec. 21 and 22, 11 am - 3 pm, City Tap House University City, 3925 Walnut St., FL 2, Philadelphia, $5, citytap.com

STEVE POWERS SCREEN PRINTING POP UP

For one day only, Mural Arts Philadelphia and Arts + Crafts Holdings are teaming up to host a pop up with artist Steve Powers. According to the release, Philadelphia native Steve Powers is a key figure in the transition of graffiti writing into street art and he is inviting all Philadelphians out to bring their own items for screen printing. Guests can chill in a lounge while their items dry and food trucks will also be on site serving up delicious bites and refreshments.
Dec. 21, 1 pm - 5 pm, 1201 Spring Garden St., Philadelphia, muralarts.org

MENORAH LIGHTING AT THE BETSY ROSS HOUSE

The Betsy Ross House is partnering up with the Old City Jewish Arts Center for the second year in a row to host the second annual community menorah lighting this weekend. The lighting will take place at 4:30 p.m. on the first night of Hanukkah, and the festivities will also include a free buffet featuring holiday favorites like latkes and jelly donuts, and plenty of children's activities that are perfect for the whole family. The community is also invited to join the menorah lighting nightly, all eight nights of the holiday if they can't make it out this Sunday.
Dec. 22, 4:30 pm, Betsy Ross House, 239 Arch St., Philadelphia, historicphiladelphia.org
MOLLY GIVEN

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A few tasty treats from Small Oven Pastry Shop and Porcos. ALL IMAGES BONDFIRE MEDIA

The dream combination of *porchetta and pastries*

Chad Durkin's new dual concept eatery in South Philly is a must-see.

MOLLY GIVEN

Porchetta and pastries in one place? Must be a dream — and for Chad Durkin, owner of the new Small Oven Pastry Shop and Porcos, it kind of is.

Durkin originally inhabited the space of the now "porchetteria" and pastry haven with another South Philly classic, Kermit's Bake Shoppe (opened in 2013), but this time around the business is a solo venture for the culinary extraordinaire. After working in the pastry biz for years (Durkin got his start at The Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College and later went on to work for Susanna Foo and then the Cake Boss himself, Buddy Valastro), the dessert expert has now launched his own venture and it will tickle the fancy of all sweet and savory foodies alike.

Small Oven Pastry Shop and Porcos opened this week on Washington Avenue, adding to the already blossoming idea of Point Breeze becoming the City of Brotherly Love's newest bustling area (the idea was launched with the likes of Chick's and the recently opened second location of Dock Street Brewery). The shop is quite unique: the pastry portion of Small Oven has its own entrance and seating area, while the connected Porcos is literally a window that guests can walk up to, order through and enjoy.

Durkin wanted to find a way to serve Philadelphians traditional Italian-style whole roasted pork sandwiches exactly like those he grew up on while visiting Ariccia, a province of Rome. If that was his mission, he has certainly achieved that and then some. The menu offerings from Porcos are unique, and the taste of each item is – and I can't stress this enough – absolutely out of this world and unlike anything else you can find in the city.

Porcos offerings range from porchetta sandwiches (which can be enhanced even more with delectable add-ons such as crispy prosciutto strips and a truffle goat cheese spread), ciabatta bread pizzas (weekends only) and other zesty handhelds (think flank steak sandwiches with herb mushroom stuffing and a pork and meatball sub with house gravy), with a few vegan options being served up as well. All guests have to do is place their order at the outside window and either wait outside or inside to pick up.

Small Oven, on the other hand, has gone down a sweeter route. Durkin creates beautiful, bite-sized pastries daily with indulgent offerings including eclairs, cream puffs, mousse cakes, tarts, galettes, and cookie sandwiches. All of the mouthwatering bites are available per piece or by the baker's dozen fresh from the display case. Guests can enjoy their tasty treats inside while enjoying freshly brewed coffee, tea and other cold beverages, or can bring their own spirits (luckily there is even a beer distributor right next door).

Both Small Oven and Porcos are worth the trip to Point Breeze, in fact, I dare you to stop by and not immediately fall in love with the space, the products and the atmosphere. From the hardworking staff to the hard-hitting flavors, it's quintessential Philly.

Porcos will be serving Tuesday through Sunday from 9 am to 8 pm (or until they sell out) and Small Oven Pastry Shop will be open 9 am to 6 pm. For more information about either Porcos or Small Oven Pastry Shop (2204 Washington Ave.), visit porcosphilly.com or smallovenpastryshop.com

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Where to ring in 2020 in Philly

Dance, drink and dine at these nine events on New Year's Eve.

MADELINE PRESLAND

This New Year's Eve isn't just about celebrating the arrival of a brand new year. It's about celebrating the last decade in style, and these Philly bars and restaurants are going all out so you can party like it's 2020. From fancy black tie to casual all-day events, here are nine ways to celebrate New Year's Eve in Philly.

Thirsty Dice

Celebrate 2020 with a throwback to 1920s glamor during a fabulous Roaring 20's Murder Mystery Party at Thirsty Dice in Fairmount. Interrogate your fellow partygoers to find the culprit while enjoying cocktails, a chocolate fountain and a full buffet dinner. Purchase tickets in advance for $75 or $85 at the door.

Thirsty Dice, 1642 Fairmount Ave., 8 pm, $75-$85, thirstydice.com

Tattooed Mom

Whether you want to get the party started early or late, Tattooed Mom is there for you. The bar and restaurant on South St. opens at noon. Try one of their signature drinks or their NYE cocktail, The Midnight Rose, made with sparkling wine, aperol, orange bitters and rose syrup. Grab fun party favors like limited-edition postcards to send good cheer via snail mail to start your 2020 off right.

Tattooed Mom, 530 South St., 12 pm, Pay as you go, tattooedmomphilly.com

Aqimero at the Ritz-Carlton

Welcome the new year in style at the gorgeous Aqimero in the Ritz-Carlton, Philadelphia. The restaurant is located in a grand hall complete with high ceilings, gorgeous columns and a modern cozy lounge. Enjoy a champagne fountain, whole pig roast dinner and luxury late-night hors d'oeuvres while counting down to midnight.

The Ritz-Carlton, 10 Ave. of the Arts, $250, aqimero.com

Franklin Square

Celebrate NYE with the kids at the adorable Franklin Square in Old City. Festivities include a "S'MORESgasbord" DIY s'mores bar, the annual Square Drop and a kids' dance party. Stick around to get a great view of the Rivers Casino New Year's Eve Fireworks show from the square. Stop by the winter beer garden to grab a beverage and warm up by the fire pit.

Franklin Square, 200 N 6th St., Free, historicphiladelphia.org

MilkBoy

Dance the night (and year) away at MilkBoy's free party at their Chestnut St. location. Choose between two floors for dancing and drink specials, including $4 well drinks and beers of the night. If a champagne toast isn't your thing, you'll love MilkBoy's tradition of toasting the new year with complimentary whiskey shots.

MilkBoy, 1100 Chestnut St., Pay as you go, milkboy.tv

Stratus Lounge

Status Lounge at the Hotel Monaco hosts an ethereal Midwinter Night's Dream party at their rooftop bar in Old City. Enjoy an open bar until 2 a.m., snacks and music from DJ Jabair. Buy tickets just for yourself or reserve bottle service packages for you and nine of your closest friends.

Stratus Rooftop Lounge, 9 pm, 433 Chestnut St., $139+, stratuslounge.com

U-Bahn

Get ready for a classy party during the 5th Annual Eyes Wide Shut

Head to Stratus Lounge on NYE to celebrate in style. CRIS MOLINA

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Masquerade New Year's Eve at U-Bahn. Grab a mask to get in the mood for drinking and dancing all night long at the (literal) underground bar in Midtown Village. Admission price includes hors d'oeuvres and an open bar.

Tradesman's, 9 pm, 1322 Chestnut St., $90+, tradesmansphl.com

The Trestle Inn

Put on your dancing shoes and head to the Trestle Inn in Callowhill for their annual NYE-A-GO GO! dance party. Boogie to classic disco on vinyl while Go Go by the Trestle Specials keeps the party going. Don't miss trying one of their specialty whiskey sours in addition to the champagne toast at midnight. Start the night early and get there before 11 p.m. for reduced admission.

The Trestle Inn, 9 pm, 339 N 11th St., $10-15, thetrestleinn.com

Ardmore Music Hall

Take a trip back in time to 1920s New Orleans for this retro Roaring 20's New Year's Eve Soirée in Ardmore. The Soul Rebels bring the brassy energy of traditional second line parades to help you march into 2020. Opt for one of the VIP packages to get access to a NOLA-themed dinner menu by Ripplewood Whiskey & Craft, as well as an open bar.

Ardmore Music Hall, 9 pm, 23 East Lancaster Ave., Ardmore, $30+, ardmoremusic.com

The whole family can head to Franklin Square for NYE. CRIS MOLINA

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"The Rise of Skywalker' is a great tribute to Leia"

DAISY RIDLEY

In the new film directed by J. J. Abrams, English actress Daisy Ridley plays Rey, a young woman with great physical skills, who is proud, responsible and has great leadership qualities. In 'Episode IX,' the scavenger says goodbye to Leia Organa, the Force-sensitive leading general of the Resistance, played by Carrie Fisher, who died in December 2016 and appears through the use of unreleased footage from 'The Force Awakens' and 'The Last Jedi.' Metro chatted with the 27-year-old Ridley to learn more. MARÍA ESTÉVEZ, MWN

So, the Daisy & Rey journey already lasts for 5 years.
I actually think it has been six because I started auditioning when I was 20 and I got the role when I was 21 ... it's been a while.

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Did you change a lot since then?
I think I'm pretty serious but also quite silly, which is a side of Rey we haven't seen yet, but there is a bit more of it in this film. I definitely don't have the struggles that Rey has, because my actions don't determine the fate of the galaxy. I do try to do the right thing, though. I do my own stunts, so physically, I guess, we're pretty similar. I mean, I think she's great, I really love her as a character. So I think if there are any similarities, I'm thrilled with that. It's not like I'm trying to run away from that.

This role has placed you into the spotlight. It must have been hard.
It was hard, I love privacy. And then everything suddenly happened. And then my parents' names are on the internet and my sister's and my favorite meal. That was quite strange. And at the time it didn't feel that strange. And now I think, 'Oh my God, you can't take any of that back, that's just out there.' So that has been a shift. But weirdly, it has become easier, as it now comes in waves. So, it's fine. I'm also pretty strict with my boundaries.

If you could talk with yourself from five years ago, would you say 'everything is going to be okay?'
I would say that. I also have realized I am quite a control freak. So I would say like, 'It's okay, you are still in control of yourself, your reactions. And, also, enjoy it.' Because I did enjoy it. I'm having such a great time and I wish I'd enjoyed it slightly more and got less stressed about it.

Do you experience anxiety as there is no other "Star Wars" movie now on your schedule?
There's definitely a scheduling hole in my life. I'm not doing anything after Christmas. It is fun until the film comes out. And then I'm going to ask, 'Oh, my God, what now?' I'm prepared for that.

Will you miss "Star Wars?"
Yeah. It's a great story, but I'll also really miss working with people that I really love and I felt this comfortable with. I'm very grateful for how it's been. But you just have to go on, life takes turns, you know. And I know that it's not like I'm never going to see these people ever again.

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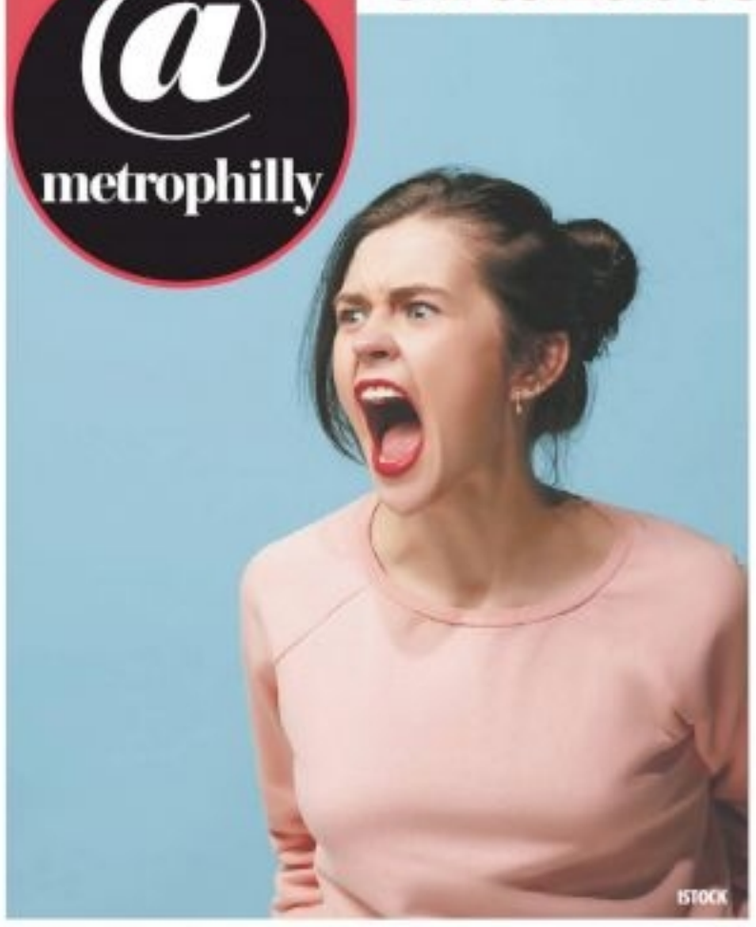

READER WRITE-INS:

ELECTRICAL PROBLEMS

I have this one light fixture in my apartment that always goes out no matter how old the light bulb is. I've had my super come to try and fix it multiple times and nothing seems to work. The light bulbs just keep frying once I turn the lightswitch on! Maybe it's haunted or something?

Sarah, *Metro US reader*

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Talk to friends and relatives, and make plans for the holidays. Don't be fooled by bargains.

Taurus Be content with the way you look and be confident in the way you present who you are and what you have to offer.

Gemini Keep moving until you complete everything on your list. A change regarding a rule or regulation should not be ignored.

Cancer Emotional meddling will take place if you let an outsider interfere in your personal affairs.

Leo Take part in an exciting challenge, but don't take a risk that could jeopardize you physically.

Virgo Let your actions speak for you. Helping others is admirable, but remember to put your loved ones first. A positive attitude and change at home.

Libra If you ask friends and family to help with chores, you will finish them faster, leaving time for a little festive cheer.

Scorpio Reconnecting with someone from your past will confuse you. Don't believe everything you hear.

Sagittarius If you offer your best effort when helping someone in need, favors will be granted to you in return.

Capricorn If you want something, go get it. Don't wait for things to come to you; bring about change.

Aquarius An in-depth conversation will lead to valuable information and a clear conscience when you must make a decision.

Pisces A financial gain or gift is heading your way. Focus on home, family and togetherness. Make plans that will encourage short trips, physical activity and working with others to make life better. EUGENIA LAST

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2 missing in South Philly row home explosion

The blast sparked a fire that spread to multiple row homes on the 1400 block of South 8th Street.

MORGAN ROUSSEAU
morgan@metro.us

Firefighters work to extinguish the flames after Thursday's explosion. PHILADELPHIA FIRE DEPARTMENT

At least two people were trapped Thursday after a massive blast at a South Philadelphia row home sparked a fire that spread to adjacent buildings, prompting an extraordinary response from firefighters.

Officials say the explosion happened at a home on the 1400 block of South 8th Street, near Reed Street, around 11 a.m., causing at least one building to collapse and trap occupants and setting off a 3-alarm response. The fire involved at least three buildings, fire officials said. Firefighters were furiously working to find victims. SEPTA buses were assisting in the evacuation of residents.

It took firefighters three hours to subdue the flames, but as of 3:30 p.m., rescue efforts were still very much under way.

Philadelphia Fire Commissioner Adam Thiel emphasized that although the fire was mostly extinguished, there were many unknowns.

"As you can see, this is still an active fire fight," Thiel told media gathered at the scene. "Until we've had a chance to get inside the building, it's going to take a signficant amount of effort, and will be a challenge."

Thiel said officials were waiting for the gas to be turned off in the area so they could carry on their search and investigation. Smoke and fire were making it difficult for firefighters to fully access the scene, he said.

Thiel said firefighters arrived to find one building fully collapsed, with multiple other buildings suffering structural damage. They searched the rubble looking for signs of life, and evacuated the adjacent homes. Power and gas was being shut off following the incident. More than 100 firefighters and medics responded to the scene, he said, as did the Salvation Army.

"This will be an extremely risky and dagnerous operation to perform," Thiel said of the search efforts, adding that firefighters were still trying to figure out how many people were in the structures at the time of the blast.

"There is still a lot of uncertainty," he said. "We don't know how many people are potentially trapped.... We are going to do our absolute best to figure out who is inside and what their status is."

He called the fire "gas-fed," but it was not clear if gas work was being performed on the block at the time of the blast.

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Catch a free ride with SEPTA after the Eagles-Cowboys game

Travelers can get a free ride on the Broad Street Line Sunday starting at 5:30 p.m.

BECCA GLASSER-BAKER
Rebecca.Glasser@metro.us

FILE

Sports lovers looking for a cheap and easy commute can rejoice, because this Sunday SEPTA will offer free rides home on the Broad Street Line after the Eagles-Cowboys game.

The free rides are thanks to a collaboration with Independence Blue Cross and will begin from the NRG Station on the Broad Street Line.

"Independence Blue Cross knows how passionate Philadelphians are about their Eagles, and we share that excitement for our home team," said Daniel J. Hilferty, Independence Blue Cross CEO in a press release.

Hilferty added, "We are pleased to join with SEPTA to provide free, safe, and convenient rides home from four home games this year."

The free rides will begin at 5:30 p.m. and they will end at 10:30 p.m.

Even though the rides home are free, the regular fares will be in place while traveling to the game earlier in the day.

SEPTA will add 10 Sports Express trains to its regular schedule that day.

The Sports Express service will run every ten minutes from the Fern Rock Station, starting at 1:25 p.m. and ending at 3:35 p.m.

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MATT BURKE

Matt Burke is a veteran sports journalist and the Founder and Editor in Chief of MetroBet.

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Here we go!

The de facto NFC East championship game has finally arrived, and despite the mediocre overall records of both teams, this is still Eagles versus Cowboys with a division crown on the line.

The Cowboys have been favored all week at DraftKings Sportsbook with the spread moving from -2.5 to -3 in favor of Dallas. It should be noted that the vig here is Eagles -121 with the Cowboys at -103.

The over – under for Cowboys versus Eagles is 46.5 points, with the money line at Cowboys -150 and the Eagles at +132.

The reason why Dallas is favored here is solely because of their impressive performance last weekend against a quality opponent (a 44-21 home win over the Rams).

ALL GETTY IMAGES

The Cowboys aren't exactly lighting it up on the road, however, as they don't have a win over a quality opponent on the road this season. The closest that Jason Garrett's team came was in New Orleans as Dallas lost 12-10. But that game was three months ago, and the Cowboys are an entirely different animal right now.

You could also make the case that the Eagles don't have a signature home victory this season against a good team. Their most impressive performances actually came in losses, as they held the Patriots to 17 points and held the Seahawks to 17 points in November.

Truth be told, the Eagles and Cowboys have been two of the hardest teams to figure out this year betting-wise (particularly lately).

Dallas is 8-6 against the spread this season, while the Eagles are an ugly 5-9 ATS.

All told, though, I just can't trust a Garrett-led team to go on the road in a hostile environment and take a must-win ballgame.

The play: Eagles +3

TWEET OF THE DAY

Joe Fortenbaugh
@JoeFortenbaugh

Lamar Jackson is the first Ravens QB selected to the Pro Bowl since Vinny Testaverde in 1996. There is so much about that nugget that has my mind all twisted up this morning.

Best bets

NFL betting: Cardinals at Seahawks

Seahawks supporters should be treated to a shootout at CenturyLink Field on Sunday afternoon as the Arizona Cardinals pay their annual visit. Cardinals QB Kyler Murray owns some solid road splits, especially for a rookie. He's thrown just five of his 17 TDs on the year in away games but just one of his 10 INTs. Murray's completion percentage drops from 65.6 at home to 63.5 on the road, but his average yards per attempt increases slightly from 6.7 to 6.9. He's also been sacked just 15 times on the road compared to 31 in Arizona. Murray and running back Kenyan Drake, who rushed for 137 yards and four TDs against the Browns last week, should run roughshod over the Seahawks' 25th-rated defense by yards allowed per play.

The same could be said for Seattle's ninth-ranked scoring offense as they face a Cardinals defense that's in the bottom five in just about every meaningful category, including scoring (30th at 28.4 points allowed per game). Seahawks signal caller Russell Wilson should have no trouble attacking Arizona's league-worst pass stoppers.

The play: Cardinals - Seahawks Over 50.5

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NFC East up for grabs as Eagles host Cowboys: What to watch

The Eagles host the Cowboys for the divisional lead on Sunday afternoon.

JOVAN ALFORD
sports@metro.us

The Philadelphia Eagles (7-7) will be looking to take sole possession of first place in the NFC East when they play the Dallas Cowboys (7-7) on Sunday afternoon (4:25 p.m. ET, FOX).

The last time these two teams played each other was in Week 7 on Sunday Night Football at Jerry World. The Cowboys defeated the Eagles, 37-10, in that highly-anticipated early season matchup.

Philadelphia's defense had no answer for the trio of Dak Prescott, Ezekiel Elliott and Amari Cooper. Prescott completed 77 percent of his passes for 239 yards, a touchdown and an interception. He also added a rushing touchdown.

Elliott, however, gashed the Eagles for 111 rushing yards on 22 carries and a touchdown. Lastly, Cooper had five receptions (five targets) for 106 receiving yards.

In regards to the Eagles, quarterback Carson Wentz completed 61.5 percent of his passes for 191 yards, a touchdown and an interception. He was also sacked three times and lost two fumbles.

Philadelphia is coming into Sunday's must-win game off of another second-half comeback victory over the Washington Redskins (37-27). Dallas, however, snapped their three-game losing skid with a blowout win over the Los Angeles Rams (44-21).

A win on Sunday puts the Eagles in first place in the NFC East. GETTY IMAGES

Will the undermanned Eagles pull off their third-straight division victory? Or will the Cowboys win the NFC East crown on the road?

To answer those questions and more, here are a couple of things to watch out for in this pivotal Week 16 battle:

WHICH EAGLES DEFENSE WILL SHOW UP?

In their last two games, the Eagles' defense has given up their fair share of big passing plays in the first half, putting themselves in comeback mode.

If Philadelphia wants to win on Sunday, they cannot afford to let the Cowboys offense convert big passing plays. It will only help to open up the run and get Elliott rolling, too.

However, the good news is that the Eagles play better at home than on the road. This season, Philadelphia's defense is only giving up 17.9 points per game at Lincoln Financial Field. In their last five home games, the Eagles' defense has given up 17 points or less.

WHO STEPS UP ON OFFENSE FOR THE EAGLES?

Over the last two weeks, we've seen young players such as running backs Miles Sanders and Boston Scott, along with wide receiver Greg Ward Jr. step up when their numbers were called.

Last Sunday against Washington, Sanders had 172 total yards and two touchdowns, while Ward had 61 receiving yards and hauled in the game-winner.

Therefore, who could be the unlikely hero on Sunday? It might be wide receiver Robert Davis, who was promoted off of the practice squad last week and can stretch the field.

The Cowboys' defense will try to make sure Wentz cannot lock in on his favorite target — Zach Ertz, which means someone else must rise to the occasion.

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PUBLIC STORAGE # 08128, 7000 Lindbergh Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19153, (215) 309-8051
December 26, 2019 Time: 01:00 PM

0008 - Irvin, Galen; 0009 - IMANI ARTS,INC Dreher, Kevin; 0018 - Jones, Sabriyah L; 0036 - Roberts, Quendijah; 0077 - Garner, Patricia; 0100 - Artis-Blake, Robin; 0177 - Gyeh, Robert; 0352 - Bent, Dwayne; 0426 - Shaw, Keisha; 0473 - THOMAS, TERRELL; 0519 - Brown, Janeen; 0567 - Gibson, Lynda; 0587 - Barreto, Javier; 0605 - Anderson, Rose; 0625 - Miller, Victoria; 0629 - Robinson, Jeffery; 0657 - Zimmerman, Emily; 0672 - Walker, Kendra; 0674 - HARRIS JR, CHARLES; 0702 - Freytiz, Melanie; 0738 - Knight, Shanay; 0760 - Pigford, Joshua; 0828 - LEE, GLENN; 0914 - Prom, Vannara; 8005 - Charity, Denise

PUBLIC STORAGE # 08130, 592 Swedesford Road, Berwyn, PA 19312, (484) 626-0120
December 27, 2019 Time: 10:00 AM

2066 - Keefer, Michael; 2280 - Keefer, Michael

PUBLIC STORAGE # 29204, 2112 W. Main Street, Norristown, PA 19403, (484) 290-0217
December 27, 2019 Time: 10:30 AM

1002 - Scott, Marcus; 1066 - Pegon, Drew; 1100 - Wicker, Florence; 1135 - Minor, Antoinette; 2099 - Nacho, Donna; 2117 - Charled, Linda; 3020 - Vear, Philip; 3095 - Brown, Kenneth; 3140 - Hill, Alaina; 3157 - Scott, Mark; B1024 - Sacks, Linda; C1018 - Walters, Kenvil; D1021 - Demedio, David; D1023 - Northington. Darryl

PUBLIC STORAGE # 23102, 2025 Chemical Road, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462, (484) 408-0906
December 27, 2019 Time: 11:00 AM

E202 - Sorkin, Scott; E256 - Michener, Cathy; F457 - Coffey, Laura

Public sale terms, rules, and regulations will be made available prior to the sale. All sales are subject to cancellation. We reserve the right to refuse any bid. Payment must be in cash or credit card-no checks. Buyers must secure the units with their own personal locks. To claim tax-exempt status, original RESALE certificates for each space purchased is required. By PS Orangeco, Inc., 701 Western Avenue, Glendale, CA 91201. (818) 244-8080.

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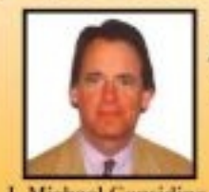

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Notice is hereby given that Broad and Spruce Associates is submitting a Final Report for the property located at 311 South Broad Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) as outlined in the Pennsylvania Land Recycling and Environmental Remediation Standards Act (Act 2). Broad and Spruce Associates has decided to request Act 2 liability protection for soil beneath the property in an area of a former underground storage tank (UST). Broad and Spruce Associates has demonstrated attainment of Residential SHS MSCs for soil by excavation of visually impacted soils.

Any comments should be submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection, Southeast Regional Office, Land Recycling/ Cleanup Division, 2 East Main Street, Norristown, Pennsylvania 19401.

This notice is made under the provision of the Land Recycling and Environmental Remediation Standards Act, the Act of May 19, 1995, P.L.#4, No.2.

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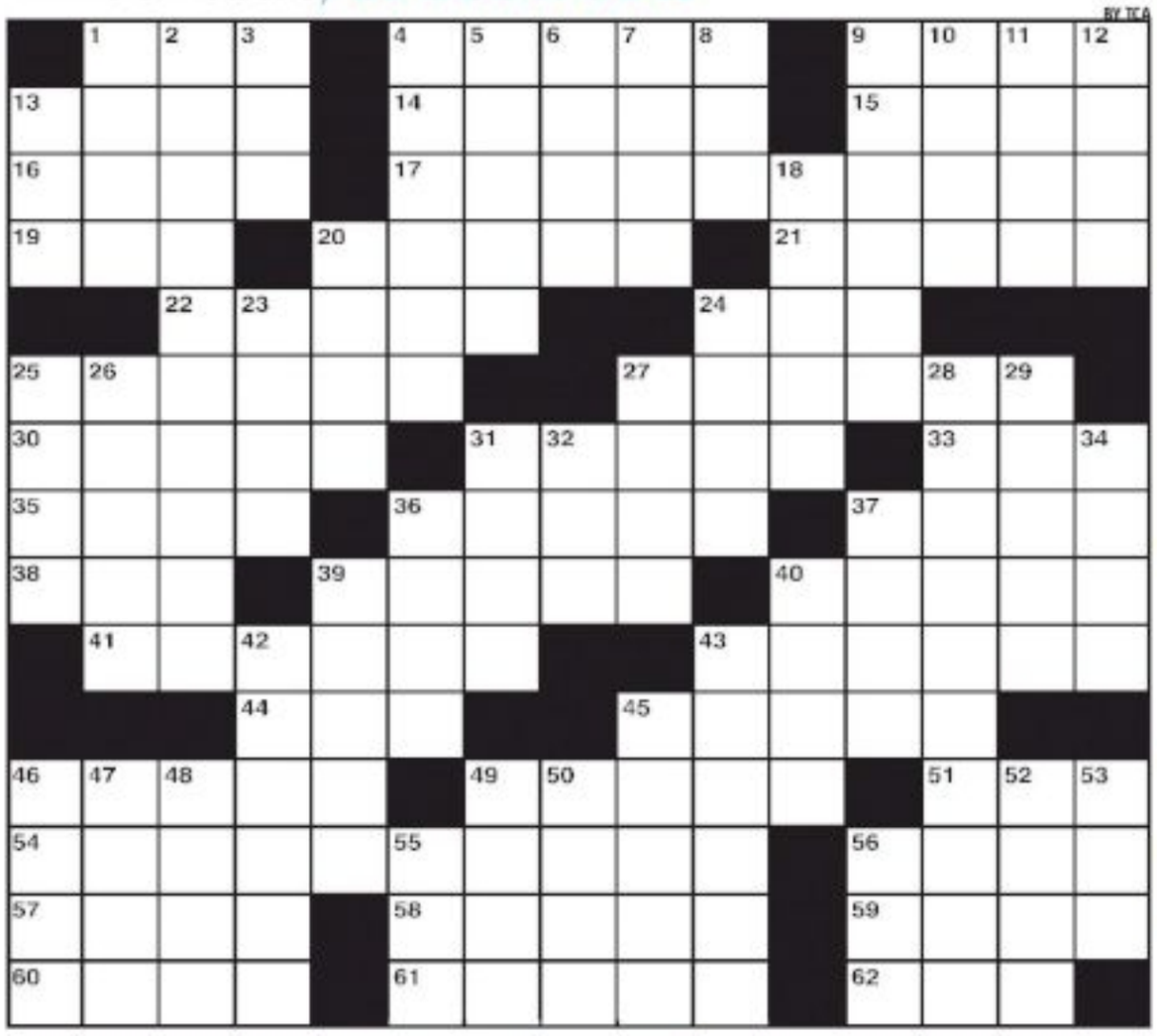

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ACROSS

1 Noisy bird
4 21st-century U.S. president
9 Poison ivy symptom
13 Give a hoot
14 Word before bears or opposites
15 Oxford or loafer
16 Abysses
17 Smile or frown
19 Late great heavyweight
20 Frock
21 Young hoodlums
22 Dog's misery
24 "__ whiz!"
25 Sci-fi staples
27 Banquets
30 Tooth problem
31 Socrates or Onassis
33 Knock
35 Passionate
36 Smooth and shiny
37 Capsule
38 __ culpa
39 Strikes with an open palm
40 Disney dog
41 On cloud nine
43 All thumbs
44 "I do," for one
45 Vise
46 __ than; besides
49 Fine mist
51 Warm welcome
54 Drugstores
56 Out of danger
57 All __; listening
58 Spouses
59 Shoelace problem
60 Running shoe brand
61 Florence's place
62 Common contraction

DOWN

1 Lockup
2 Faux
3 Positive reply
4 "Tosca" & "Carmen"
5 Crates
6 Great place to ski
7 One of the planets
8 "Roses __ red, violets..."
9 Magazine editions
10 Skinny
11 Chef
12 Roosters' mates
13 Many a tax preparer, for short
18 Utter
20 Refuse to admit
23 Pencil's core
24 Computer tech, often
25 Actor West
26 Embankment
27 Charges
28 Jubilantly victorious
29 Seasons at the table
31 Elated
32 Elected official: abbr.
34 Stratagem
36 Murdered
37 Prune, before it's dried
39 Violent weather
40 Theater event
42 Reluctant; unwilling
43 Elegant
45 Fish basket
46 Uncapped
47 Bangkok native
48 "__! The Herald Angels Sing"
49 "Take a hike!"
50 Pocket bread
52 Eerie sightings, for short
53 __ it; understand
55 Parisian pal
56 Word before lift or boots

metro.us/wordsearch

M	O	N	O	P	O	L	Y	M	M
S	O	L	I	T	A	I	R	E	A
Y	R	R	O	S	F	O	U	R	G
R	I	S	K	S	E	A	Y	A	U
G	L	H	Q	E	C	R	T	Y	E
O	S	I	L	H	I	R	V	S	S
F	G	G	F	C	D	J	M	D	S
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E	T	A	■	D	O	N	S	■	■	R	I	N	S	E
■	■	T	H	E	F	T	■	W	O	N	■	■	■	■
S	H	E	E	N	S	■	■	C	O	U	G	A	R	■
T	A	R	R	Y	■	F	L	E	E	T	■	L	U	G
A	V	I	D	■	D	E	A	N	S	■	S	T	I	R
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■	■	■	G	A	S	■	■	G	N	O	M	E	■	■
S	T	E	E	P	■	■	S	O	A	P	■	T	W	O
T	R	A	N	S	I	S	T	O	R	■	C	H	A	D
O	U	S	T	■	T	E	A	S	E	■	H	E	L	D
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610-583-7867
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Martha Landi B1, Del Ewing 87, William Bishop 116, William Bishop Jr 116, William E Bishop Jr 116, Thomas Le 177, Donelle Henry 200, Cassandra Outlaw Langston 275, Veronica Clarke 468, Danielle Jeffries 568, Shirley Walker 604A, Tina Togba 623B

Metro Self Storage 4440 E Bristol Rd., Trevose, PA 19053
215-396-1110
The bidding will close on the website StorageTreasures.com and a high bidder will be selected on 12/27/19 at 1:00pm.

Tracy Gaeta 1112, Lesa Shirley 2430, Adam Rakita 5002, Stephen Underwood 5134

Metro Self Storage 1145 Easton Road, Willow Grove, PA 19090
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Vernon Skinner 107, Vernon Skinner 112, Shirley Pouncy 2032

Metro Self Storage 1634 Mearns Road, Warminster, PA 18974
215-441-4400
The bidding will close on the website StorageTreasures.com and a high bidder will be selected on 12/27/19 at 3:00pm.

Robert Morgan A002, James White Jr A009, Taylor Mitchell B001, John Grofsik D020, Dennis McGovern D31C, Dennis McGovern E48C, Robert Morgan L015, Justin Efkowitz L035, Elisa Feinstein WA084 Roger Stiehl WB053, Michael Branch WB077

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